

The Kulin continuum

The impact of European colonisation on the Kulin population and their traditional culture was dramatic. Only a handful of decades of contact with the namadji (the white spirit) saw the unravelling of a culture born out of tens of thousands of years of connection to the land. This affected family traditions, songs, ceremonies and even sacred sites. A complete way of life was shaken to the core and many lives were lost.

For many colonial Europeans in those early years, the destruction of Aboriginal lives and culture was viewed as an inevitable result of social evolution. Unfortunately, after almost 200 years many people still hold on to this 19th century rationale.

'The Kulin, indeed all Aboriginal people and their diverse culture, survive!'

Continuity of Aboriginal people and their connection to the Land can be likened to a bushfire. Initially nothing seems to remain but ash and smouldering stumps, but soon new shoots and new life emerge — a resurgence of vigour and strength.

Although Aboriginal people are often viewed in a historical sense, they have adapted and grown in this new landscape. They now pursue not the emu but careers as computer programmers, artists, athletes, motor mechanics, teachers, government officials — some live in the very suburb in which you now stand.

However there are many reminders throughout Melbourne of traditional Kulin life — a 'scar' tree stands in Fitzroy Gardens, there are rockwells and shell middens along Narrm (Port Phillip Bay) and earth rings in Sunbury that once hosted important ceremonies. Even names very familiar to Melbournians today reach back to the ancestral Kulin with metropolitan suburbs such as Mooroolbark, Kooyong, Mordialloc and Warrandyte. Even major urban centres like Dandenong and Tullamarine are places rooted in Kulin culture and tradition.

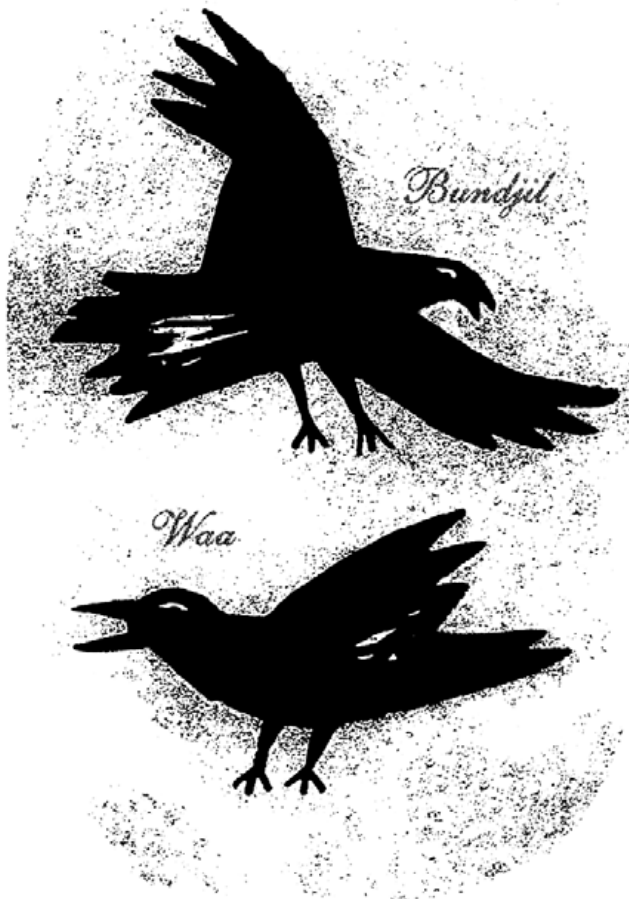
This interpretive trail

In the series of interpretive signs that make up this trail you will have the opportunity to piece together a glimpse of local Kulin life and culture. As you walk the Land you can connect these stories — stories of great harmony and equal sadness. By doing so, in a small way you will be walking the same path that Victorian Aboriginal people walk today. The loss of traditional lands and the struggle of generations of Aboriginal people for rights and acknowledgement means they too must re-weave the intricate threads of their indigenous culture, songs and stories. While much may 'seem' gone, one thing which always endures for Aboriginal people is their Spirit with the Land.

So please, feel the shape and flow of this Land under your feet, listen for the cry of Waa the black Raven, and look at the indigenous vegetation that surrounds you now. Aboriginal people and their culture are still here — indeed just like this very bushland their connections grow and gain in strength.

'Always, eternally connected to the Land.'

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to Mallanbool Reserve. Glen Eira City Council is proud to pay tribute to the traditional custodians of this area and wishes to acknowledge both the Ancestors and their descendants who continue to walk and care for this Land, in life and in Spirit.



'We are here, we are part of this place'
The region now known as Melbourne is the ancestral lands of the Boonerwuring and Woiwuring (Wurundjeri) people of the Kulin nation.



Olearia ramulosa
Twiggy Daisy-Bush



Olearia ramulosa
Twiggy Daisy-Bush

Twiggy Daisy-Bush is a spindly, sprawling shrub that formed part of the understorey at Mallanbool Reserve. Its name, 'ramulosa', means having many very small branches, and perfectly describes this low growing but densely branched plant. The usually small flowers, white and massed, cover the branches from May to September.

Helichrysum scorpioides
Button Everlasting
Neringnerit : Woiwurrung

Button Everlasting forms dense mats of low growth spreading by underground stems. The ground-level leaves can become 70 millimetres long but the leaves on the stem are much smaller.

Its flowers are large yellow daisies, up to 30 millimetres wide with brown papery bracts. They are displayed from September to December.

Around the Mallanbool Reserve area, Button Everlasting grows in sunny and slightly shaded positions in well-drained soils.

Helichrysum scorpioides
Button Everlasting



Chrysocephalum apiculatum
Yellow Buttons

Yellow Buttons form low, wide spreading masses with small bright yellow flowers in clusters at the end of branches. Flowers can be found at many times of the year, though the heaviest flowering is from September to December. The silvery leaves contrast with native grasses among which it grows in open pockets.

Chrysocephalum apiculatum
Yellow Buttons



Craspedia glauca
Billy Buttons
Bimbat : Woiwurrung

Billy Buttons are familiar and widespread plants that formed a decorative element of the ground flora of Mallanbool Reserve. The yellow globular flower heads are produced from September to December from a basal rosette of broad, hairy leaves.

Craspedia glauca grew around Mallanbool Reserve in open sunny areas on well-drained soils.

Craspedia glauca
Billy Buttons

